

2. The OIC's Physical Examination of Requested Background Reports Revealed Few Documents with Evidence of Multiple Stapling or Folded Corners.

The OIC examined 303 of the background reports of individuals who no longer required White House access for physical evidence that they had been photocopied -- such as missing staples or folded corners.⁵² Only a small fraction of the reports contained pages from which staples had been removed and no pattern of folds was detected from which to conclude that the reports had been photocopied.

a. Staples

The OIC examined 303 background reports obtained directly from OPS after concluding that they were background reports requested for individuals who no longer required access to the White House. The OIC determined that only 11 of the 303 reports

⁵² The FBI examined the remaining original background reports that were returned directly to the FBI in June 1996. When the FBI received the original reports, FBI personnel, wearing gloves, removed all staples from the reports and then bates-stamped and photocopied each page. After removing the staples, the FBI recognized that it might be significant to know whether any of the documents had been re-stapled by OPS. Documents were then examined by lining up the existing staple holes to determine how many times the documents had been stapled. The goal was to determine whether there were multiple holes that did not line up in all the documents, in which case it would be possible that OPS had removed a staple and re-stapled the documents. The examination of the documents was inconclusive. No determination could be made whether OPS had removed any staples to facilitate photocopying. James Stroud, Paralegal Specialist Civil Discovery Review Unit, FBI Office of the General Counsel, 10/17/96 Int. at 1. After these reports were photocopied, FBI personnel re-stapled documents in 135 of the reports.